



Harris County Animal Shelter Rescue Policy

Harris County Rescue Groups

An approved rescue group may place animals on hold to be removed from the shelter using the group's own resources. Those animals in the shelter that have a high probability of being adopted are not considered prime candidates for rescue. Rescue partner efforts should support the reduction of euthanasia by taking those animals that are hard to place or need additional care in order to be considered adoptable.

Each rescued pet receives a microchip and age appropriate vaccinations and testing in accordance with HCPH-VPH protocol and as deemed appropriate by the shelter veterinarian, depending on the health of the animal. There is no fee for these services.

Rescue Approval Process:

1. To apply to become an approved rescue, email rescueme@countypets.com for the appropriate documentation required.
2. Complete the above mentioned documentation and return to rescueme@countypets.com. The process for approval can take up to 2 weeks.
3. Once approved, advise HCPH Veterinary Public Health of the names of those persons approved by your organization to authorize rescue of animals.
4. Sign up to receive the daily 'RescueMe' report in PDF format. Please include each e-mail address that should receive the report. Remember, all available animals will also be listed on the web site at www.countypets.com

Rescue Group Requirements:

Minimum requirements for "medical care" include basic health exam, annual vaccinations, including rabies, de-worming and heartworm check. Animals will be put on heartworm preventative. Adopters will be given full disclosure of any health issues, including heartworm treatment. Adopters will also be given a written medical record upon adoption.

Animals will be clean and parasite free.

Animal housing facilities will be clean, disease free, and parasite free. Animals will be contained in a safe, secure, appropriate, and humane manner. Animals will not be allowed to run loose with access to a public sidewalk or street.

Diets will consist of healthy, nourishing and quality food appropriate to the age and condition of each animal. Fresh food will be given daily and in sufficient amounts to assure animal health and well-being, and must be stored in a sanitary manner.

Fresh water will be provided daily, in a sanitary manner and in sufficient amounts, and animals will have access to water at all times.

Animals will be altered before adoption. The animal will not be bred or allowed to breed for any

reason prior to spay/neuter.

Proper amount of temperament assessment will be done prior to adoption. Members will not place animals they believe are unsafe in temperament or behavior. Adopters will be given full disclosure of any temperament issues.

Rescueme participants will not place animals in foster or adoptive homes that are believed to be unsuitable or incompatible to the rescue animal.

The animal will not be abused, treated cruelly, neglected, or subject to any experiments.

The animal will not be attack or guard trained, or used in any manner of animal fighting.

Rescue groups or individuals will perform appropriate screening of adoptive and foster homes prior to animal placement.

Rescue group agrees to insert a clause in the rescue application stating that should an adopter no longer wish to keep an animal, it will be returned to the rescue group.

Rescueme participants will not give, sell, lend, or otherwise transfer ownership of animals to laboratories, breeding operations, non-animal placement corporations, etc.

Rescueme participants will not give, sell, lend or otherwise transfer ownership of animals to any unapproved organization. Participants may, at their discretion, transfer to other approved groups providing they accept responsibility for the disposition of the animal according to these requirements. All ownership should be updated to reflect the transfer of said animal internally.

Rescueme participants taking animals from the shelter are ultimately responsible for the disposition of those animals according to these requirements.

Rescueme participants will conduct themselves in an appropriately professional manner and will be responsible for the professional behavior of their volunteers while interacting with shelter personnel in the shelter itself and on all social media platforms.

Rescueme participants will have available upon request the complete records on each animal, including acquisition information, medical procedures, and final disposition for a period of 3 years from the time that the animal was pulled.

Neither rescue groups themselves, any member of their family, or anyone connected with the rescue group may adopt animals that the rescue group is, by the definition of their by-laws, able to rescue. No animal will be adopted to any person with the intention of rehoming the animal within the confines of an individual rescue or through personal contacts or associations. Attempting to adopt, or adopting an animal under false pretenses will result in the immediate suspension of the group's rescue privileges.

Rescueme participants will be allowed to view animals within the shelter, however they must request assistance from HCAS staff to remove an animal from a kennel.

All rescue groups must abide by all policies and procedures set forth by Harris County Animal Shelter.

Medical Rescue Approval Process:

1. Any group may apply to become a Medical Rescue if you agree to the guidelines set by Commissioner's Court.
2. As an approved rescue, you are eligible for a Temporary Custody Agreement that will allow you to pull animals needing immediate medical care prior to the end of the 3-day stray hold time
3. To apply for this agreement go to:
http://www.hcphees.org/vph/Rescue_Animals/index.html
4. Download a copy of the agreement, fill it out and sign it. Then mail the original to the shelter at:
HCPHES Veterinary Public Health
612 Canino Rd.
Houston, TX 77076
Attention: Temporary Custody Agreements
5. Temporary Custody Agreements can take 30 days or more for approval
6. A medical rescue tag will take precedence over a non-medical rescue tag within the 3 day stray hold of an animal

Tagging Procedure:

- Placing a tag by phone – PREFERRED METHOD
 - Rescue approved representative will call main line (281)999-3191 press "0" to be connected with an operator
- Have animal ID number and your group's personal ID number ready
- Group provides pick up time and date (pick up person may be set at a later time but must be sent beforehand as an animal will not be released to a person that has not been designated to pick up on behalf of the rescue group)
 - Pick up date must be within 24 hours from the time the animal becomes available.
 - If not picked up within time frame, the animal becomes available for another rescue group/adoption.
 - Should an adopter enter the facility and request an animal with a confirmed rescue tag with pick up for that same day, the rescue will take precedence.
 - If you make an appointment to pick up the animal, we will hold the animal for your rescue group until the appointment time. Animals placed on hold for rescue can only be held past the stray hold if space is available.
 - When placing a tag, please include the name of the person who will be picking the animal up. Please make sure that person has a picture ID with them to verify their identity. Changes or additions of animals can only be approved by the person you designate as 'approved to authorize' and that is listed in our database.
 - Please confirm the status of the animal before coming to the shelter to determine if the animal was possibly claimed by an owner.

- Placing a tag by email
 - **There is no guarantee that an animal will be held if the email is sent after hours**
 - An official rescue tag should be sent to the Rescueme email account
 - The subject line should display the animal(s) being tagged
 - The format for placing a tag is as follows:

Rescue Name:
PID:
Person APPROVED to place tag:
Person APPROVED to pick up:
Date and time of pick up:
 - Tags placed in any other format run the risk of not being confirmed
 - Group provides pick up time and date (pick up person may be set at a later time but must be sent beforehand as an animal will not be released to a person that has not been designated to pick up on behalf of the rescue group)
 - Pick up date must be within 24 hours from the time the animal becomes available.
 - If not picked up within time frame, the animal becomes available for another rescue group/adoption.
 - Should an adopter enter the facility and request an animal with a confirmed rescue tag with pick up for that same day, the rescue will take precedence.
- Tagging a “Ready to Go” Animal
 - “Ready to Go” animals (animals altered using HCAS resources) must remain available for adoption for 7 consecutive adoption days (day one begins the day AFTER the animal is altered and concludes at close of business 7 days later)
 - Animals arriving at the shelter already altered may be tagged by rescue and picked up when available
- Owner Surrendered Animals
 - Available to be tagged upon intake for rescue groups immediately, however emails are not responded to immediately due to resources. Therefore, holds for owner surrendered animals are only honored if called into shelter and confirmed by office staff
- Tagging Outside Telephone Hours
 - A rescue can send a request to tag to the Rescueme email understanding that no guarantees can be made unless you receive a confirmation email back from the Rescueme email account. Please do not send a representative to the shelter with the expectation that the animal will be released until confirmation as been given.
- Adopters
 - The goal of HCAS is to create a thriving adoption program that put pets into forever homes as quickly as possible
 - Adoption holds will override rescue holds until the DAY OF SCHEDULED pick up
 - If transporter does not arrive on the day of scheduled pick up, the rescue tag may be overridden by an adopter or rescue group

- Pick Up
 - Rescues may not pick up until the end of a stray hold at close of business.
 - Transporter must be in the lobby by 5:30pm to be receipted out at 5:50pm.
- Medical Rescue Tags
 - An official medical rescue tag should be called in to 281-999-3191
 - If an email must be sent, please email rescueme@countypets.com
 - The subject line should display the animal(s) being tagged
 - The format for placing a tag is as follows:

Treating Veterinary Clinic & Phone Number

Rescue Name:

PID:

Person APPROVED to place tag:

Person APPROVED to pick up:

Date and time of pick up:

- Tags placed by email in any other format run the risk of not being confirmed

DISCLAIMER: Holds are not confirmed without the written or verbal confirmation from a shelter staff member

Change of Information

Any changes in group information or contact information should be sent to RescueMe@CountyPets.com. This includes changes in intake coordinators, telephone numbers, web sites, and e-mail addresses.

Telephone numbers or addresses meant as confidential, in-group use only, and not for use by the public should be so noted.

Grievance Procedure:

1. Complaints must be submitted in a written, signed format to:

Countypets-RescueMe Grievance
 HCPH Veterinary Public Health
 612 Canino Rd.
 Houston, Texas 77076
 Any corroborating data and contact information should be included in the letter.
2. The HCPH Veterinary Public Health Administrative Committee will review the grievance. Involved parties will be contacted within 30 days and their responses reported to the committee.
3. The Committee will investigate the grievance and determine what action, if any, will be taken.
4. At the completion of the investigation all parties will be notified in writing of the Committee's findings and any actions taken.
5. The Committee will confine its investigations to those allegations that are in violation of the Countypets-Rescueme Requirements

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY

I, _____ (print name), with _____
(name of rescue group) declare that:

(i) I am aware that Harris County Animal Shelter's policies are available to me upon request. It is my responsibility to familiarize myself with these policies and follow them accordingly.

(ii) In addition, I confirm that I have received, read and understood the following policies:

☒ Harris County Animal Shelter's Rescue Policies

(iii) I agree to conduct my activities in accordance with Harris County Animal Shelter's rescue policies and understand that breaching these standards may result in pulling privileges being suspended or revoked.

Address: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature of Rescue Representative: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only (Please Print)

VPH Representative: _____

Date: _____

Notes: _____